

SPECIAL LOTUS ISSUE  
\$3.00

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FEB 20 1987

*Integral Yoga*

*Double Issue, taking the place of v. 17:3-4 (1986)*

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## INTEGRAL YOGA® AND YOU

INTEGRAL YOGA® Magazine is the official organ of the Integral Yoga Institutes, Teachings Centers, and Satchidananda Ashrams. These centers are vehicles by which the Integral Yoga teachings of Sri Swami Satchidananda are lived and shared. The centers offer ongoing programs in the various branches of Yoga — including Hatha, Raja, Karma, Bhakti, and Jnana Yogas — as well as instruction in yogic diet and other related topics. There are open classes, courses, teacher training programs, universal worship services, and retreats for both beginners and more advanced students. Resident programs, providing an opportunity to experience total yogic living, are also possible.

A wide range of guest programs are offered at the Ashram in Buckingham, Virginia. Located at the Virginia Ashram are: The audio-video department, book publishing and distribution services; a preschool, elementary and junior high school, and the international coordination offices for all Integral Yoga Centers.

The LOTUS (Light Of Truth Universal Shrine) — a shrine dedicated to the Light of all faiths and to world peace — is open to the public and is located in Yogaville, Virginia.

For more information, to arrange for an Integral Yoga program for any group, or to be put on our mailing list, please feel free to contact any of the centers listed inside the back cover of this Magazine. We are here to serve you.

## Letter from

We tried. Then we threw out what we had done. Then we tried again. Again, it was unacceptable. We were trying to write about the Dedication of the Light Of Truth Universal Shrine and the World Faiths Symposium. But there were no adequate words to describe the experience.

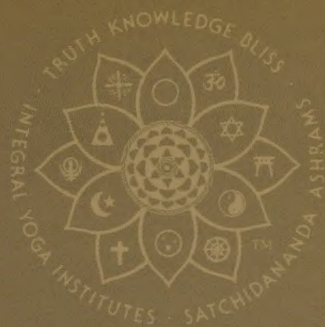
"You could see that words weren't what any part of the weekend was about. It was about experience." Paraman Barsel, Assistant Coordinator of LOTUS '86, told us. "The great thing that this whole weekend did was that it gave you the experience of that unity. On Saturday morning, at the World Faiths Symposium, it was especially meaningful to me — just seeing assembled on the stage turbaned Sikhs and Moslems, sitting next to Hindus in dhotis and upper cloths, next to Catholic monks, and so on — to see all the different clergy and other distinguished speakers sitting together and talking in harmony — that expressed clearly the unity that the LOTUS stands for."

Certainly for everyone who participated in that weekend, the experience was deep and rich with feeling.

One person recalls the weekend like a beautiful dream. "It went by so fast with so much happening that it seems a blur. But in the midst of that lovely blur are many lights — the radiance of Sri Gurudev Swami Satchidananda and the other great spiritual leaders — shining bright and strong, individual, yet together."

Jnanam MacIsaac, Coordinator of LOTUS '86 said, "Experiencing the leap from one and half years of intense planning of the event inside our minds to being physically surrounded by the actu-

# e Editor



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## SRI SWAMI SATCHIDANANDA

(called "Sri Gurudev" by his students) is a master of Yoga, a world spiritual teacher, and Guru of the students of Integral Yoga. He is dedicated to the ecumenical movement, his motto being: "Truth is One, paths are many." His main residence is in Buckingham, Virginia. In response to invitations from around the globe, he travels widely, sharing with people through every possible medium: lectures, conferences, radio, television and newspaper interviews, books, and visits to centers around the globe in the fields of education, religion, health and Yoga.

al manifestation of those plans in a tangible form . . . it was an altered state of consciousness for me. On the level of the manifestation of the Shrine itself after so many *more* years of planning, one can only imagine what Sri Gurudev must have felt."

We don't really *know* how long the Reverend Sri Swami Satchidananda has dreamed of a place to promote harmony among the world's many faiths. We are aware that this vision came to him at least thirty years ago, but he has probably envisioned it for much much longer than that. At least we know that from childhood in this lifetime, Sri Gurudev has seen beyond divisions of caste and creed and has loved everyone equally. The devotees who have observed him for years have often marveled at his ability to see the heart of every person, every situation.

Now, his vision and perseverance have born fruit. It has not been easy to bring such a great dream to reality. We are humbly and eternally grateful for this gift.

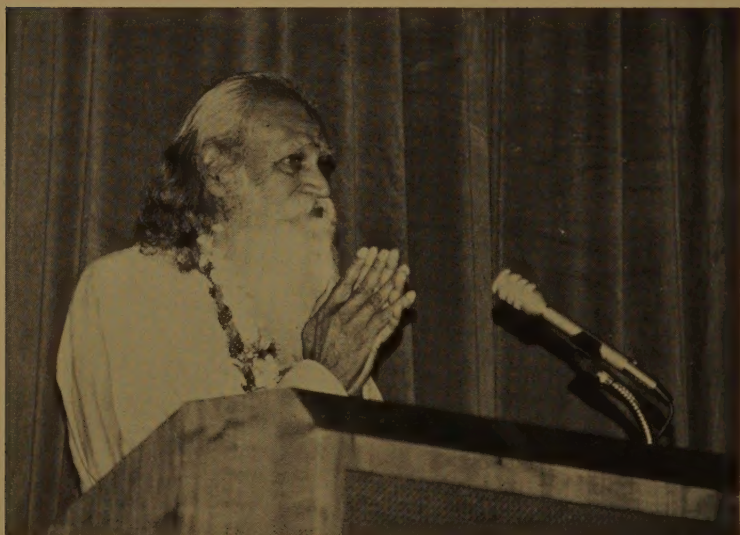
But, how to describe it? We cannot. It must be experienced. We strongly recommend that our readers view the video tapes of the Dedication weekend to experience it for themselves. Even more than that, we recommend that you actually visit the LOTUS. To walk into the Shrine is to experience the essence of the Dedication. All the auspiciousness of the weekend, the presence of all the holy beings who dedicated the LOTUS, the prayers and good wishes of people all over the world (many of whom were unable to attend the Dedication), and the universal heart of Sri Gurudev—all of these may be experienced within those holy walls.



# MANY APPROACHES TO ONE TRUTH

by Sri Swami Satchidananda

*from Sri Gurudev's remarks at the World Faiths Symposium*



Beloved friends, this World Faiths Symposium is really a great opportunity for us to come together and to understand each other and our essential unity. We all know that each mind has at least a little difference from other minds. In the act of creation, God – or whatever you like to call the One who created the entire universe – seemed to never make duplicates. The modern scientists say that even two snowflakes are not exactly similar. Two bodies are not similar. Two thumbs are not similar. We are all different physically, mentally, intellectually and, of course, materially too. But in one

thing we *are* one. That is spirit. It is the same spirit that runs through every individual, everything in life. The life force that runs through this body is the same that runs through a small mosquito. That means that we are all united in spirit. A mosquito is my own brother or sister. And that is what we call universal love, and that is what we call God. If God is love, it means that if you can express that universal love, you are none other than God . . .

It is to emphasize that unity in the midst of varieties that we are gathered here. That's why it's a world symposium,

with the theme "Truth is One, Paths are Many." There are many approaches to one Truth.

All of our friends here this morning have many cultures, many approaches, but we are all here together to express that one Truth. Let us experience that one Truth.

As our Barbara Marx Hubbard said, "Thoughts are the beginning, words are the continuation, but the acts should be the culmination." Action is most important . . .

My very dear friend Father Pillai said, "Find the unity within yourself." It's true. The Bible said "Love thy neighbor as thyself." If we take time to analyze that phrase, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," we see that it means you have to see yourself in your neighbor. Only then can you love him or her as your own self. How can we do that?

To give a small analogy: Imagine that I give you a tray of fruits. I ask you to look for the apple and pick it up. You look at everything on the tray. If you have to identify the apple, what do you need to have already within you? The image of an apple. Unless you know what an apple is you cannot pick the apple from the tray. So, to pick the apple you should have the apple in you. In the same way, to pick your neighbor as yourself you should know who your self is. That is why the scriptures say, "Know thyself. Then see thyself in your neighbor. Then love your neighbor as yourself.

It's not only the charity that begins at home; even that knowledge - the knowledge of one's own self - helps you to see yourself in everybody, in everything. That's what is called self-realization. It begins within. It begins at home. It begins with the individual.

We talk a lot about seeing the same spirit in everybody, but unless we recognize that we are the spiritual beings essentially functioning in this body and mind, we don't identify ourselves as the Spirit. Instead, we identify ourselves with other things that we use. When you use a human body, you are a human. But

when you use an animal's body, you are an animal. When you use the body that has a black color, you call yourself black. We usually identify ourselves with the things we use in our lives. You live in a certain country so you identify with that country and say "I am an American." or "I am an Australian." or "I am an Indian." Why? Because you happen to be on that soil, because you happen to be in a certain body. But if you recognize yourself as Spirit, you can no longer say, "Only *this* is my home; only *these* are my people."

That limited identification has to be sacrificed. That's why every shrine, every temple, every church has a sacrificial altar. What is it that we sacrifice? We sacrifice the little "I." We sacrifice the part that says, "This is mine. That is mine. And the rest is not mine." We seem to have too many mines around us. As you all know, more mines means more opportunity for explosions. Mines do explode, don't they? We may think it's only on the war field that mines are thrown. But we throw mines in the home. So we have to defuse the mine, change the label and call it Thine. It is very simple; once that is done then the "mines" won't explode anymore. We should free ourselves from all these temporary identifications. In reality we are all that pure "I," pure Self.

Wrong identification comes from the head. Not from the heart. I'm glad Barbara reminded me of the sermon at the Moscow Baptist Church. That's where I told the friends, "It's time for us to use our hearts. Keep the head a little aside. When two heads come together, what do you hear? A big noise. Right? Because the head is a hard nut. But the heart is sweet. So use your heart." That's why even the blessed Lord Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart." He could have said, "Blessed are the pure in head." But he knew it can never be that way. Unless we use the heart, there's no way of coming together. Universal love is the opening of the heart.

I don't say you should break the head



away. Keep it, let it supplement, complement, contribute a little. But the heart should play an important part. In the same sense, the general public is the heart nowadays, in every country. Who are the people who are causing the fighting between the countries? The heads. The world is being ruined by the heads. Because they use more of the head. They forget that the minute they become the "head" of something, they should really become the heart and they should remove all barriers that limit their love for everyone.

There was an opportunity for me to give a talk about world peace in Washington, D.C. There I said, "If a member of the Republican party is elected president - I'm not talking politics here, I'm just giving an example - is that person the president for the Republicans or the Democrats?"

"He is the president for the whole country."

"But if that president continues to call himself or herself a Republican, can we

honestly say that person is the president for the Democrats too? No. That means: the minute you come to a position of authority and responsibility, you should forget your party feelings. You are a common person. You belong to everybody. Unless and until that happens, these divisions will be there. Not only in the political field, but also in the religious field.

There is a beautiful saying in the *Rig Veda*: "Bring all the beautiful truths from wherever they are; and take them as your own." That is what we should remember. Let the inspiration come from all the sources. Every source, and every individual, has something to offer.

I'm not saying to get rid of your individuality. We don't want to do that. Keep your identity and use it but don't be limited to that. See everybody as your friend, as you brother, as your sister. There's only one God in the heaven; we're all God's children. We have come to play a game, not to fight. Let's have fun. Thank you so much.



I send my greetings on the occasion of the opening of the "World Faiths Symposium." In today's divided world, any and all honest efforts to bring persons of various faiths together to explore more deeply the spiritual dimension of human life are to be encouraged and applauded. The concerns of our world are many, as are the needs of the human family today. People are not automatons or machines determined by the forces of biology or history, but responsible agents for building together a better, more humane, more godly world. People of all faiths who recognize this have much to discuss, much to share from their spiritual experience, and much common cause to make on behalf of humanity. I ask God to bless your efforts here today in that direction.

Francis Cardinal Arinze  
The Vatican



Dear Friend:

Last week my husband and I were visiting close friends in the Buckingham area. On Saturday morning (July 26) we were taken to the Light Of Truth Universal Shrine. My Buckingham friends had kept it a secret because they were aware of my abiding prayer for Truth, Light and Peace in the world. They knew that my heart would sing with joy when I saw your vision as a reality.

When we came to the top of the hill and my eyes beheld the shrine, I must say, I was overwhelmed! That was just the beginning of the openings that followed and continue to come through.

This morning it came to me that to reach the Light Of Truth (or the Light and Truth), and for our visions to come into the consciousness of all peoples, there must be a purification of each path (religion) that leads to God. We must be willing to commit to one path and to follow it all the way.

The vision I had this morning showed each path to God as a clear stream of light, and all fusing together as one Light. As we know, it is easy to experience oneness on the inner levels because we know that we are all one; that only our forms separate us. However, we are living in the world and we must find a way to bring the inner into the outer; the heaven into the earth. The example that was shown to me today naturally came from my own path, the Christian.

The visions of the lotus and the rose symbolize the east and the west, and bring to our remembrance that time when all knew and lived in the Truth that we are One in God.

Let us claim the Truth, the Light and the Purity of each religion as we individually make our way back to God on our separate paths.

With blessings to you and to those with whom you work and pray,

Louise B. Wilson  
Virginia Beach, VA

Beloved Swamiji,

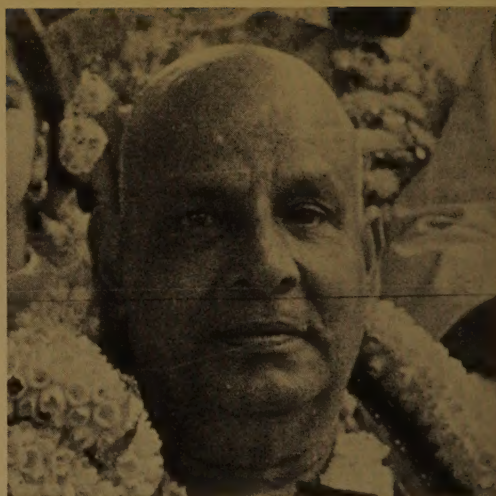
LOTUS is a great achievement and an inspiration to all of us. Only you could have done it. I was so glad and felt so privileged to be a part of that celebration - a truly heart-warming occasion.

C.V. Narasimhan



# THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

by Sri Swami Sivananda



*O Adorable Lord of Mercy and Love!  
Salutations and prostrations unto Thee.  
Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient,  
Thou art Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute  
and Bliss Absolute,  
Thou art the Indweller of all beings.  
Grant us an understanding heart,  
Equal vision, balanced mind,  
Faith, devotion and wisdom;  
Grant us inner spiritual strength  
To resist temptation and to control the mind;  
Free us from egoism, lust, greed and hatred;  
Fill our hearts with divine virtues.  
Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms.  
Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms.  
Let us ever remember Thee.  
Let us ever sing Thy glories.  
Let Thy Name be ever on our lips.  
Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever.*





Dear Gurudev,

Words cannot express the uplifting feelings I have experienced during the three days of the LOTUS dedication. You must be exhausted and elated at the same time.

I shall forever be grateful to you for inviting me to be a part and a participant in this great and glorious happening.

I must add a word of praise to your staff. They were all courteous, helpful and totally magnificent in their assignments during the entire dedication period. It was the most meaningful and joyous weekend in my life.

God love you,

Rabbi Joseph Gelberman  
The Tree of Life Synagogue  
New York, NY

## A MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR

It is my pleasure to send greetings on the occasion of the Grand Dedication of the Light Of Truth Universal Shrine (LOTUS). I share your commitment to the cause of world peace and unity among all people.

You have my best wishes for a successful dedication ceremony.

Gerald L. Baliles

Governor

Commonwealth of Virginia

## A Dream Fulfilled

by Mohini Shapero, age 13

*In my mind I see a crowd of hundreds of people from all over the world. Gurudev and the people I know and grew up with are the ones that made it happen.*

*When I think of LOTUS I feel that it is wonderful how all these different people can come to rejoice and pray as one.*

*All the time during the Dedication weekend I knew I had to be at a certain place any moment in order to garland a certain performer, speaker, celebrant, etc. Everything went so fast. I do not know how it all turned out so well.*

*For me it went better than I could ever have expected; it was perfect.*

*To see the love and pride in Gurudev's eyes throughout the entire time gave me and everyone else the strength to go on (even after only four hours of sleep).*

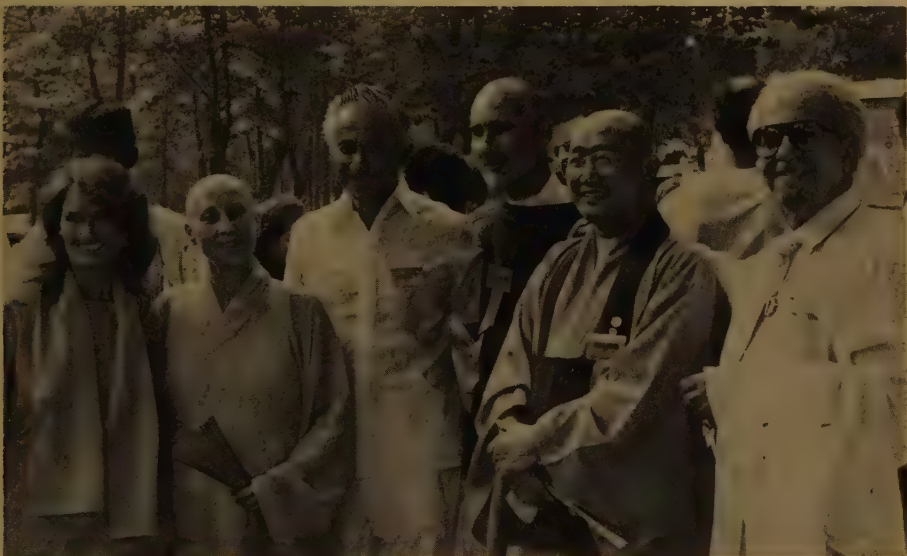
*Since the Dedication went so fast, I had not thought during that weekend about how very necessary it was.*

*Now when I'm at the Shrine I can feel the energy from the thousands of people who passed through, leaving a prayer or two.*

*I think the more people who come to LOTUS with positive peaceful thoughts will help the world be a better place. Drops do make oceans.*

*Now that Gurudev has fulfilled his dream for an ecumenical shrine, we just have to fulfill everyone's dream for world peace.*





*Six gems shining in the sun: Diane Cirincione, Venerable Gesshin Prabhava Dharma Roshi, Dr. Gerald Jampolsky, Brother David Steindl-Rast, Reverend Seung Sahn, Rabbi Joseph Gelberman.*

## The Flower Has Blossomed!

In the International Year of Peace, a beacon of peace, harmony and love was lit in Buckingham, Virginia. On Sunday, 20 July, 1986, the Light Of Truth Universal Shrine (LOTUS) was dedicated and offered to the world. Sri Swami Satchidananda, who had envisioned and designed the LOTUS, was joined by spiritual leaders of all faiths and dignitaries from around the globe for the opening services and the World Faiths Symposium on the day before.

At the height of the Dedication, approximately 3,000 people were gathered at Satchidananda Ashram-Yogaville. In spite of record-breaking heat, the weekend's events were a tremendous success. Everyone was deeply moved by the experience, and most resolved to find ways in their own lives to promote accord among all people.

### A Super Plan

Obviously, the Dedication weekend took long, careful, expert planning. The first meetings to begin planning the events started two years ahead of time. By July 1986, the expertise of devotees everywhere had contributed toward the success of the Dedication. Many planned vacation time or arranged a leave of absence from their regular jobs so they could participate in Dedication preparation. Sri Gurudev made time in his extremely busy schedule to supervise all stages of planning and preparation. Jnanam MacIsaac, assisted by Paraman Barsel and Abhaya MacDonald, coordinated all aspects of the World Faiths Symposium and the LOTUS Dedication. With the full support of her husband, Ganesh, Jnanam worked on Dedication



*Venerable Prabhasa Dharma (left) witnesses a playful moment between two brother monks — Sri Swami Satchidananda and Sri Swami Vishnu Devananda.*



*Sri Gurudev greets Sheikh Mubarak Ahmed. In the foreground sits Wallace Black Elk.*





*The World Faiths Symposium. Luminaries from all faiths and all around the world address the theme "Truth is One, Paths are Many."*

plans in her spare time for more than a year; and for six months, she donated her time fully to LOTUS '86 coordination.

In the month before the Dedication, the numbers of volunteers working full time grew to approximately 243. It was way beyond anything the Ashram and IYI members had ever attempted before. Many people voluntarily worked around the clock—often having little or no sleep—for days before the Dedication so that everything would be ready for this grand occasion. There was a feeling of joyous cooperation and anticipation in the midst of all the preparation. The devotion and dedication of all those who helped make the World Faiths Symposium and LOTUS Dedication possible are a beautiful inspiration.

### **World Faiths Symposium**

The Grand Opening and Dedication of the LOTUS began on Saturday, 19 July, with religious leaders and dignitaries from around the world joining Sri Gurudev Swami Satchidananda for the World Faiths Symposium at Charlottesville Performing Arts Center. Over 1500 people attended the morning program where

thirty-two speakers addressed the theme: "Truth is One, Paths are Many."

While planning the World Faiths Symposium, the coordinators realized that each speaker would have to be limited to three minutes if the program was to finish by noon. It was regrettable. Each speaker was dynamic and eloquent and could easily have given a wonderful several-hour program alone. But there was no choice. The three-minute limit was the only fair way to give the assemblage a chance to experience everyone. Every one of the speakers rose nobly to the occasion. Bringing all their wit and wisdom to bear, they put their ideas into the briefest form and gave beautifully moving statements. The Reverend Padma Wick acted as the gracious moderator. Perhaps even more moving than the verbal messages was the sight of these luminaries interacting lovingly, playfully, joyously, graciously with one another. Jnanam spoke of the powerful and touching camaraderie she felt "as the clergy and speakers of the various faiths introduced themselves to each other with simplicity and childlike joy as they sat in a circle backstage prior to the Symposium."

Sant Keshavadass summed up the feel-



*Above: A warm moment between  
Sri R. Krishnaswamy Gounder and  
Sri Gurudev.  
Left: Yaeko Steidl*







*Top: The Dalai Lama's official representative Tenzin N. Tethong with Brother David.  
Bottom: Perhaps a sweet secret is being shared between Sri Gurudev and Yogi Bhajan.*



*Beautiful voices raised in song. The Monks of Holy Cross Monastery.*



*Preston Adkins of the  
Chicahominy Indians  
performs a solemn  
Native American dance.*

ing of the morning so perfectly when he said, "The flower garland represents the unity of world religions. The group of speakers sitting here is a flower garland to God."

### Sacred Music and Dance

In the afternoon, a rich and beautiful variety of cultural presentations was given. Emcee Siva Fiske introduced sacred music and dance performed by: the Khalsa Singers, the children of the Yogaville Vidyalayam, the Reverend Prahaladan Mandelkorn, Wallace Black Elk and Grace Spotted Eagle, the Hindu Center of Virginia, the Venerable Khet-sun Sangpo, Lazarus Paraman Emenogu, the Chicahominy Indians, the monks of Holy Cross Monastery, and Saraswathi Sundaresan.

### Twenty Years of Service

July 1986 also marked the twentieth year of Sri Gurudev's service in the West. In a gala program on the evening of the 19th, devotees and friends paid tribute to this great servant of all humanity.

It was a fantastic program of professional entertainment featuring renowned singer/songwriter Carole King, musician Paul Winter, Bharata Natyam dancer/choreographer Padmarani Rajakumar, as well as the musical group Heartsong (Ed and Ganga Tossing), tap dancer/choreographer Sarah Petronio, and musicians Maitreya and Maloah Stillwater, Linda Worster, Nirmala Heriza, Jack and Dayavati Tottle, and Siva Fiske.

To introduce "One Small Voice" — one of the many wonderful songs she sang that evening — Carole (Karuna) King said, "This song is about one small child who spoke up for what he believed in. And Gurudev is kind of like that child. He was one person with a dream, a vision. Then more and more joined in, more will join . . . It's a song about how every one of us can make a difference . . . If it weren't for every one of us there wouldn't be a LOTUS. But there is one!"



*Venerable Khet-sun Sangpo  
offers Tibetan prayers.*

A beautiful slide show, produced by Rama and Sita Roosevelt, reviewed the past twenty years of Gurudev's service in the West.

Then Amma Kidd, who has been a devotee of Gurudev for many years and has served as one of his secretaries, spoke about his service to the world. There was hardly a dry eye as her words expressed for everyone the love and gratitude they felt for Sri Swami Satchidananda. "Thank You, God! for giving us Swami Satchidananda," she said. "Thank You for making the LOTUS." When Amma asked Gurudev to come to





*Top: Padmarani Rajakumar performs the dynamic Bharata Natyam dance that she choreographed especially for this occasion.*

*Bottom: Heartsong (Ed and Ganga Tossing) sing of "White Light."*

the stage, the audience stood and cheered as he walked forward.

Immediately Gurudev asked the stage manager to bring up the lights in the audience so he could see everyone. "The blessed Lord gave us all equal light. Don't

just put the spotlight on me!"

Gurudev spoke about God's guidance in everything. "I have heard many beautiful prayerful songs written by great saints. But one always stands out, continuously haunts my heart. The mean-



*Above: Carole  
Karuna King.  
Left: Paul Winter*



ing of it is: 'Lord, you are the indweller of all beings. You are omnipresent. You make things move, you make people move. So, who am I to do anything? How *can* I do anything? It's You. You feed me; I am getting fed. You make me sleep; I

sleep. You show me; I am seeing. You make me happy; I am happy. You make me dance; I dance. And not only me, but the entire universe. Therefore I know that without You I am nothing.'

"That prayer has become my guiding

light. I never planned anything. I never wanted anything. I'm not an ambitious person. God has simply moved me from place to place. This is all God's work, not mine."

Sri Gurudev presented special Awards of Merit to Mr. Hari Harilela, Sri N. Mahalingam and Karuna King. Then Gurudev himself was surprised with an award. Mr. William Veprin, National Commissioner of Appeal and Director of Development for the Anti-Defamation League, presented Sri Gurudev with the ADL's Humanitarian Award. He was proclaimed a Trustee of the Society of Fellows of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, "in recognition of distinguished leadership and dedicated service in advancing the cause of human rights, dignity, and equal opportunity, preserving freedom, counteracting bigotry, and promoting brotherhood for all."

Another stirring moment took place when Sri Swami Vishnu Devanandaji came to the stage to praise Sri Gurudev's many years of service in the United States and around the world.

#### "Great! A Problem!"

The program at the Charlottesville Performing Arts Center finished on time without a feeling of being rushed. After the audience left, a large crew remained at the High School packing and cleaning.

Then they returned to the Ashram to help with preparations for the Dedication, the event everyone had been waiting for and visualizing for so long.

Many devotees had stayed at the LOTUS site to be sure everything would be ready on Sunday. As with all great things, getting there wasn't always smooth. Problems arose right up to the last minute. Somehow, seemingly miraculously, they were all surmounted. The karma yogis were often reminded of Gurudev's words about such things. Throughout the planning for LOTUS '86, whenever a problem arose along the way, Gurudev would greet it with great happiness. He would say, "Great! A problem! If we don't have problems, then we don't have the fun of overcoming them and the opportunity to say that we overcame all these problems."

It seemed that God kept providing problems and challenges right up to the last minute.

On Saturday night, one of the outside contractors accidentally tracked tar onto the beautiful blue carpet in the Shrine. At this late hour, no one knew what to do. Soorya Bales, who owns a professional cleaning service, came to the rescue. This was particularly moving because Soorya was recovering from a serious automobile accident, and he was still confined to a wheelchair at the time of the



*Dancer Sarah Petronio (center) and her two star pupils — her children*



*Mr. William Veprin of the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League presents Sri Gurudev with the Humanitarian Award.*




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**The World Faiths Symposium was graced with many distinguished speakers and spiritual leaders from all over the world.**

Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad  
 Siri Singh Sahib Yogi Bhajan  
 Diane Cirincione  
 Savitri de Meyer  
 The Venerable Prabhasa Dharma Roshi  
 Grace Spotted Eagle  
 Wallace Black Elk  
 Rabbi Joseph Gelberman, Ph.D.  
 Sri R. Krishnaswamy Gounder  
 Hari Harilela, J.P., O.B.E.  
 The Reverend John F. Hotchkin,  
     representing H.H. Pope John Paul II  
 Barbara Marx Hubbard  
 Gerald Jampolsky, M.D.  
 Sant Keshavadas  
 Dr. N. Mahalingam  
 Sri Vedatri Maharishi  
 Sri C. V. Narasimhan

Brahma Kumari Sister Mohini  
 Dr. Sulayman Nyang  
 Reverend C. Joachim Pillai  
 Sri N. Giridhari Prasad  
 Sri Shanthalinga Ramaswamy Adigal  
 Dr. K. L. Seshagiri Rao  
 The Reverend Seung Sahn  
 The Reverend Sri Swami Satchidananda  
 Justice R. Sengottuvelan  
 Dr. M. P. Sivagnanagiramaniar  
 Brother David Steindl-Rast, O.S.B.  
 Sri Thavathiru Sundara Swamigal  
 Tenzin Tethong,  
     representing H. H. the Dalai Lama  
 Sri Sa. Vee  
 Dr. T. K. Venkateswaran  
 Sri Swami Vishnu Devananda

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*Brahma Kumari Sister Mohini.*

*Reverend Seung Sahn (right) and a disciple.*





Father Joachim Pillai

LOTUS Dedication. Late Saturday night, he heard about what had happened to the carpet. Soorya knew just what to do, and he wanted to do it. He came to the Shrine and moved across the carpet on his hands and knees, lovingly removing every hint of tar from the Shrine's carpet.

#### Transported to Heaven— LOTUS Dedication

On Sunday morning, the LOTUS was sparkling in the sun. Everything was ready. Near the Shrine, tents had been erected to house refreshment areas, child care activities, information, bookstore and gift shop. Two huge tents had been set up right next to each other to shield everyone from the sun during the morning service.

Near the Shrine's Grand Archway, thousands of people waited in hushed readiness. Two tigers rested under small canopies; they too seemed to be waiting for something marvelous to happen. Suddenly, from the distance bagpipe music was heard. The parade was com-

ing. Everyone looked up toward the sound. They could see the bagpipe player rounding the bend at the magnificent overlook on the path coming to the LOTUS. Next came a beautifully decorated baby elephant. But it was the sight of the celebrants and the blue satin banners with the symbols of the world's faiths that really stirred people's hearts.

One participant recalled, *"When the parade first rounded the bend at the overlook, and we saw the banners of the world faiths and the All Faiths banner itself, when we saw it approaching and heard the incredible sound of the bagpipes, it was an other-worldly experience. It really seemed that we had literally been transported to heaven. I felt it was a procession you might see if the saints were going to come marching in."*

The celebrants gathered in the west reception building, and everyone assembled under the large tent for the worship service. There was a hush. Then the choir began to sing "All Creatures of Our God and King" as the celebrants came in stately procession to the All Faiths altar on the stage. Many people felt a tremendous emotional impact.

*"Seeing all the celebrants in their clerical robes—so colorful and varied—watching them march in representing all the religions of the world, listening to the Western choir singing a traditional Western hymn, all the cultures and countries seemed to be coming together. For me, that memory said everything about what the weekend meant."*

The service allowed everyone to deepen that experience. A simple altar stood in the center of the stage. In the center of the altar was one large candle. The voices of the choir raised once again in song as all the celebrants together reached out with their lighted candles and simultaneously lit the central light.





*Top: Hearts stirred as the World Faith banners came into view.*

*Lower left: Many tents were set up to accommodate activities at the Dedication. The ecumenical service took place in the large white tent.*

*Lower right: A proud banner bearer.*



*Top: In stately procession, the celebrants approach for the ecumenical service. Swami Shankarananda holds the torch with the universal light.*  
*Bottom: Many local Buckingham residents participated in the opening parade.*

Each celebrant spoke briefly and made an offering to the central light.

Sri Gurudev offered this prayer: "Beloved Lord, in the form of this light, please accept all of our humble prayers and worship. Bless us to raise above these physical and mental limitations. Help us to experience the one light within us all. Let us live harmoniously as Your beautiful children. Bless this holy place to vibrate peace, health, prosperity and harmony. Let there be a lot of healing vibrations in this area so that people can get healed of all their physical, mental and material problems."

Among the many other beautiful words spoken that morning:

Wallace Black Elk: "Today I respect this candle lighted here. This will be the light of the world. It will lighten our minds and our hearts. This was a gift to us from Grandmother, the Earth . . . There are sacred colors, the rainbow colors. All life has sacred colors. We're in a color TV world right from the beginning. Yet so recently people discovered that. But now we're all here and all the beautiful colors

are here and we're not going to be color-blind anymore."

Victoria Parvathi Pratt-Ford: "Let this light remain as a never-ending symbol of our constant faith that this is the truth, that we are all one, that we are all light, and that we can radiate throughout the universe with this light."

Siri Singh Sahib Yogi Bhajan: "Today is a special day. A united religion is born. The Shrine of the LOTUS represents that unity, that grace, that divinity and that infinity. It is that which the heart and head must bow to."

Rabbi Joseph Gelberman: "All is one. That which seems to be an opposite really is not in opposition because all is one."

Brother David: "It is a great privilege to represent here the Christian tradition, not as separated, but as united with all. If we address God as our Father/our Mother, I'm reminded of all God's children; not only the two-legged or the four-legged, or the crawling ones, but all God's children."



*At the ecumenical service, Sri Gurudev offers a prayer for unity.*





*Top: Parvathi Ford offers an African prayer.*

*Bottom: The joy of feeling unity with all is expressed by Brother David.*



*Top: Sri Santhalinga Ramaswamy Adigal and Sri Thavathiru Sundara Swamigal perform a beautiful offering to the Light Universal.*

*Bottom: "We're not going to be colorblind anymore," proclaim Wallace Black Elk (right) and Grace Spotted Eagle.*



*Spreading love and peace to "all the Buddhas" — Venerable Prabhasa Dharma.*

*Venerable Prabhasa Dharma Roshi: "I pray this wonderful incense will spread out to the whole world in the ten directions offering to all the Buddhas, the wonderful dharmas, and enlightened beings and saints and sages. I pray it will form an altar of light and do the cosmic work it is intended to do. I pray it will benefit all sentient beings so they will raise the enlightenment mind, depart from evil karma and attain the highest way."*

### **Examples of Unity**

Gurudev has often said, "If the religions can't come together in peace, there isn't much hope for mankind. Religion is supposed to bring unity." For those watching the interaction of all the spiritual leaders there were many examples of this unity.

*"At one moment I especially remember in the morning program, Sri Shanthalinga Ramaswamy Adigal and Sri Thavathiru Sundara Swamigal were performing puja. At one point when they needed another implement, Yogi Bhajan very sweetly and graciously came forward to*

*hand them the implement. It was so natural, so simple. That meant a lot to me to see the Sikh and Hindu representatives together in beautiful harmony."*

*"It was very hot in the tent. And as the service went on attendants brought the celebrants fans. It was beautiful to see the different celebrants fanning one another rather than themselves. They all did it, as if it were planned; but of course it wasn't. In one accord they all seemed to have the same thought and sat there very naturally fanning the person next to them."*

The beautiful worship service came to an end. As the choir sang Beethoven's Ode to Joy, the celebrants began a stately procession out of the tent and into the LOTUS. Along the way, ribbons were cut to open the Grand Archway, the All Faiths Hall and unveil the beautiful statues.

Finally, the celebrants and other designated people entered the upper Shrine.

*"When people walked in they were overwhelmed by the magnificence of the Shrine. There was this great feeling of awe and enjoyment of the beauty of it. It felt like we were entering this protective cave. I remember the blue violet feeling of the inside of the Shrine. It felt like another place in time. Coolness in the midst of the heat. It was the way you would imagine a lotus flower in the bright hot sun of India; it would be floating on the pond but would nevertheless itself be very cool and poised. It was almost like entering another realm, like a pocket of heaven in the midst of the earth. As we settled in there was the feeling of anticipation. And almost before we knew what was happening the climaxing moments of lighting the light happened."*

Incense was burned. There were prayers and chants in different languages.





*Above: Beginning the ecumenical worship service, the celebrants light the Universal Light.  
Left: The ribbon cutting at the Grand Archway.*



Lights were waved. Flower petals were offered. The flames in the starpoints of the *mehru* were lit by the celebrants.

At precisely 12:00 noon, the central column of light went on. From floor to ceiling, this magnificent light shone gloriously. At the top of the dome, it divided into twelve rays which came down to shine on all the altars of all the faiths. Bells rang. Outside, hundreds of multi-colored balloons were released to float high and free into the air.

### **The Right Tool to Serve**

The celebrants walked out to the LOTUS balcony, overlooking the reflecting pools. Thousands watched as Sri Gurudev honored the builders of LOTUS and presented them with beautiful medallions. "We cannot forget the main ones behind the entire construction: Andrews, Large and Whidden. They have done a beautiful job. We will always remember them. May their business grow more and more, and may they

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## LOTUS Dedication Celebrants:

Shanthalinga Ramaswamy Adigal  
Siri Singh Sahib Yogi Bhajan  
The Venerable Prabhasa Dharma Roshi  
Grace Spotted Eagle  
Wallace Black Elk  
Rabbi Joseph Gelberman, Ph.D.

Victoria Parvati Pratt-Ford  
The Reverend Seung Sahn  
The Reverend Sri Swami Satchidananda  
Yaeko Steidl  
Brother David Steindl-Rast, O.S.B.  
Sri Thavathiru Sundara Swamigal

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*Inside the LOTUS: Chants and prayers in different languages precede the lighting of the central light.*

build more and more LOTUSes so that people can come together and enjoy the harmony." William K. Whidden, Jr., accepted the honors on behalf of Andrews, Large and Whidden, Incorporated.

Gurudev turned to LOTUS construction foreman Lewis Thompson. "Without him I couldn't have done anything! To come to this day, we have gone through a lot of difficulties; still he was here day and night. Every inch of this Temple was

observed, supervised and conducted by him. Lewis Thompson, God bless you!"

Sri Gurudev addressed the assembly once more. "Beloved friends, with your permission, let me take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude and thanks to all those beautiful ladies and gentlemen, swamis and maharishis, sages and saints who came to bless us, bless this occasion and to open the various sections of this LOTUS." Children from the Yogaville Vidyalayam came forward to



*Left: The Light of Truth. A magnificent column of light rises to the top of the dome and descends in rays to shine equally on the altars of all faiths.*

*Below: The All Faiths Hall—the Shrine's lower level—is dedicated.*







*"Without him I couldn't have done anything!" Sri Gurudev honors Mr. Lewis Thompson, LOTUS construction foreman.*

reverently present medallion garlands to all those distinguished guests who took part in the Dedication.

What happened next was a spectacular surprise to most of the thousands gathered for the opening.

In the procession from the tent to the Shrine, each of the celebrants had carried a small pot of holy water from the worship service. At the Shrine, they had all poured this water into one large vessel. After the speeches from the balcony, Sri Gurudev took the large container of holy water and entered the helicopter which had been waiting near the LOTUS. The fascinated crowd watched as the craft, piloted by Garuda Buss rose into the air. Gently it hovered right over the spire of the LOTUS. It was difficult for Garuda to see if the helicopter was positioned correctly, and Gurudev patiently guided him to the precise spot. Finally, they were right on target. Garuda had very skillfully provided special belts for Gurudev so he could lean out of the helicopter safely. Still, many people on the ground

gasped as Sri Gurudev—holding the vessel of consecrated water—put one foot on the helicopter's runner and leaned very far out over the LOTUS. In a truly magnificent moment, he performed the *abishekam* (pouring water over something holy, in worship).

Loud cheers went up from the crowd, and the cheering continued as Gurudev, in the helicopter, circled the LOTUS three times.

*"From the very start of the planning for the Dedication, there were many ideas about how to pour the abishekam over the Shrine. And from the early days of planning, no matter what else was discussed, Sri Gurudev always came back to the idea of a helicopter. He always had that clear vision.*

*"In the crowning moment of the whole weekend, which was the crowning achievement of his ecumenical work up to that point, it was a perfect visual metaphor for his whole service in this modern world: He is a master who*





*Facing page: The abishekam. From the helicopter Sri Gurudev pours holy water over the LOTUS.*

*Left: Thousands walk from the Grand Archway toward the newly dedicated Shrine.*

*honors the past without clinging to it. He doesn't hesitate to use technology to extend his service. The point is how he's taken the essence (which the abishekam is) of the teachings and shown how they're totally applicable to our place and time in this seemingly explosive modern 20th century. He seems to say there's nothing off limits if it's good and useful. A helicopter is totally appropriate in the midst of a puja if it's the right tool to serve."*

Now the Light Of Truth Universal Shrine was officially open to all. The public began to walk through the Shrine. Because thousands of people would be coming through in a relatively short period of time, ushers stayed in the Shrine to be sure that no one had to wait out in the sun longer than necessary. Many of the ushers commented how deeply moved they were as they watched the faces of all those who entered the

LOTUS for the first time. Whoever they were, wherever they'd come from, whatever age or background, they were awe-struck. As the day went on, the ushers noticed many people coming back a second and third time, often to sit in quiet prayer or meditation.

### **God Expresses**

After the dedication ceremony, a delicious Chinese feast was served to everyone who had come for the Dedication. Charlie Yu and his staff at the Mandarin Restaurant in Charlottesville had been planning this catered lunch for months. With hundreds of responses to the invitations coming in even the day before the Dedication, it was necessary to increase the number of lunches in the last moment. Remarkably, Mr. Yu was able to meet our needs; and the meal was delivered right on time, all the way from Charlottesville.

With so many people coming, services





Left: Mr. and Mrs. Hari N. Harilela with Sri Gurudev and Yogi Bhajan. Opposite—Above: Paul Horn performed his beautiful, meditative music for the afternoon gathering Sunday. Below: Sri Gurudev and Brother David during the Sunday afternoon program.

needed to be available in case of injury. Nurse Kalyani Yarusso had organized an elaborate first aid station. Dean Ornish, M.D., Shirley Brown, M.D., and Sandra McLanahan, M.D., joined Kalyani in providing efficient and loving service throughout the day and evening. They were kept quite busy treating bee stings and effects of the heat, but nobody had any serious problem the entire day.

*"The thing that struck all the planners was that we had been planning intricately for months and months and had gone over every detail so carefully dozens of times and revised and refined them again and again. It was all so precisely organized. But when the event was actually happening it had a life of its own that transcended all the planning. Many things happened very differently from the way they were intended. But they all happened beautifully. You could feel that it was, in a way, a lesson for many of us. I think it was that if something is really God's will, God will find the way to express it, and it will be expressed in God's*

*own way. That doesn't mean that we shouldn't have done anything. We had to do the planning and research and preparation—and do our very best. But the final thing that we had to do was let go and just watch it unfold perfectly the way it was supposed to."*

In the late afternoon, a wonderful entertainment program was offered in the large tent. The mostly musical program included: renowned musicians Paul Horn and Roop Verma, pianist Narada Burton Greene, Linda Worster, cellist Vishnu Wood, musician Richard Hardy (who had accompanied Carole King the night before), Maitreya and Maloah Stillwater, Siva Fiske, Nirmala Heriza, harpist Shakti Harrison, and Bhagavan's Celestial Magic troupe.

Congratulations and good wishes continued to pour in from around the world, and many of the messages and telegrams were read throughout the afternoon program.

The Guru Tattwa Ratna (jewel of the Guru's teachings) Awards were presented





*Moonlight and fireworks over the LOTUS.*

to hundreds of devotees who have served the Integral Yoga Institutes and Satchidananda Ashrams over the last twenty years.

### **Festival of Lights**

The entertainment ended, and a light supper was served. By this time night had fallen, and the LOTUS, lit so spectacularly, looked truly other-worldly—like some majestic and lovely vision from heaven.

Jnanam MacIsaac recalls a “magical, spiritual wonderland of lights and colors. I have never seen or experienced anything like that.”

Everyone gathered again in the large tent, where special, non-toxic chemical candles contributed by Padma and Prasant Hansma were distributed to everyone. The Reverend Shanthi Mandelkorn recited the LOTUS Prayer, and the LOTUS celebrants led the procession to the other side of the LOTUS Lake.

Watching from a distance, one would see a long line of lights moving in stately promenade around the Lake. Gentle words of song rose from the line as everyone sang, “God’s light, pure and free; Light of lights, enlighten me.”

Finally, the procession reached the far side of the Lake.



*"When we got there and stood on the bank and looked back across the lake at the LOTUS, the extraordinary thing was that the full moon was high in the sky alongside the Shrine. To make it even more dramatic there were sparse clouds in the sky so that when we first arrived the moon was partially behind them and then emerged. Streams of moonlight came through the clouds—like a sunburst. You could see Jupiter and Saturn and the stars shining very brightly in the sky. Except for those few clouds, it was a crystal clear night. Yet, there was distant lightning. It was flashing high in the sky behind the hill where Ananda Kutir is. So we had this fantastic natural light show. It really seemed that all of nature—heaven really—was celebrating this temple of Light."*

A prayer to the light, by Sri Gurudev, was read; and then all the candles were offered into the Lake.

*"When we all cast our lights into the water, they sort of patterned together and moved together with the gentle breeze or*

*current that was there. Eventually they came in to the shore and started to spread out until they lined the entire shore of the lake, as if it had all been planned that way."*

Robert Heart, a professional fire dancer, had come all the way from Hawaii just to perform at the LOTUS Opening. After the lights were offered into the lake, everyone sat down on the shore and looked back toward the LOTUS. At the base of the north end of the Shrine, Robert began a stunning display of fire patterns. Twirling several torches at a time, he amazed the crowd with the beauty of the dancing fire.

The climax of the evening was an incredible fireworks display. Bhagavan Antle and Galen Chadwick had spent a long time arranging the special LOTUS Opening fireworks, and their expert planning was worth it. Afterward, many of those who saw the presentation—many who had seen professional fireworks displays around the world—said that it was the most beautiful, dynamic fireworks they had ever seen.



LOTUS '86  
Coordinator  
Jnanam MacIsaac  
with Assistant  
Coordinator  
Paraman Barsel.  
(Not pictured:  
Assistant  
Coordinator  
Abhaya  
MacDonald.)

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*"The whole impact was almost overwhelming. Watching the fireworks up over the spectacularly lit LOTUS, the clear sky, the moon, the bright stars, the lightning—it was just spectacular beyond belief."*

Before giving a closing prayer to the day's auspicious events, Sri Gurudev thanked "all my beloved children who made this a grand success." But the real thanks, he reminded everyone, were to God, Who created the LOTUS, made its completion possible, and gave us all an opportunity to be part of it.

In a spirit of joyous quiet, everyone walked back toward the front of the Shrine. There was a feeling of tremendous good will and love.

*"Of course all the planning was over now and there was that incredible feeling of release having watched it all unfold. There was nothing more to be said. It was just a sheer joy, the realization that LOTUS was there for everyone always. I think, even then, it was still just dawning on us what LOTUS really was and what it would be and what a great gift it was to us and everyone who would be able to experience it."*

No one wanted to leave. The Temple looked so magnificent, all lit up at night. People should have been exhausted, so many had been up all night. But they were wide awake. Several dozen quietly walked over to the Shrine and meditated late into the night.

*"I think on some level anyone who experienced the LOTUS Dedication carries that experience with them in many ways that they may not even be aware of. But on a conscious level, wherever you may be in the world just think of LOTUS and you can easily remember that experience. There's an atmosphere that's so rich and heady, being inside the LOTUS blossom. I almost associate it*

*with a fragrance myself. And you can so easily remember that whole wonderful atmosphere, that wonderful spiritual energy. It's very natural for me to picture the column of light in the LOTUS as being within me, because that experience is there. And I'm sure, in as many different ways as there were people there, people have carried away some very concrete connection to LOTUS that they can so easily visualize in different ways to help them feel that energy of the light within, the LOTUS of the heart and mind."*

Now, the Light Of Truth Universal Shrine sits amid the beautiful Virginia countryside. Visitors from all countries and all walks of life visit daily. Throughout each day people sit in silent meditation and prayer. Even those who live at the Ashram and visit the LOTUS every day are not able to take its presence for granted. It is like nothing else we have ever experienced.

We feel eternal, inexpressible gratitude to the Reverend Sri Swami Satchidananda, who envisioned this great Shrine of Peace and Light, who designed its physical manifestation, who often participated in its actual building, who—in spite of an unbelievably busy schedule—supervised every step of construction; who oversaw, choreographed and directed the beautiful Dedication; who had the endlessly patient love to make the LOTUS a reality and offer it as a gift to the world.

—Swami Prakashananda Ma, Paraman Barsel,  
Swami Sharadananda Ma

The staff of Integral Yoga magazine humbly apologizes for any errors or omissions in this special report about the LOTUS Dedication. Most of all, we apologize for not being able to mention the name of each person whose selfless service made the Dedication and World Faiths Symposium such a success. Our thanks to every single one of them.



*Sri N. Mahalingam  
is honored with the  
Award of Merit.*

*Revered Swamiji,*

*I am particularly thankful to you for having honored me at the LOTUS Festival. I very much enjoyed participating in all the functions of the LOTUS inauguration in Charlottesville as well as at Yogaville.*

*I am sure that the LOTUS will soon become a Universal shrine which will attract pilgrims and tourists from all over the world. Now, I am reminded of the words of Mahatma Gandhiji which apply to you: "I consider myself a Hindu, Christian, Muslim, Jew, Buddhist, and Confucian." In the same way you consider yourself a Hindu, Christian, Muslim, Jew, Buddhist, Taoist, Sikh, and etc. Today, your Holiness belongs to the whole world.*

*Words cannot express my feelings for the kind arrangements you made for our stay, and I do hope that it will be possible to spend some time every year in that salubrious spiritual climate.*

*Our respectful regards to your Holiness and our warm regards to all the Ashramites who have done a great job very well.*

*With respectful regards,  
Sri N. Mahalingam  
Madras, India*





My dear Swamiji

Sat Nam. Greetings in the Name of God, the Light of every soul, and in the Name of Guru, the life of every Sikh.

It was an unequalled experience to come to the LOTUS. It was witnessing the foundation of the united religion; united spirituality was born. It took a giant like you only twenty years to do it, whereas it took two world wars to create a United Nations. You took two decades to unite spirituality into reality of Oneness of God and Light and gave everybody unity in diversity, self respect in common communion and dignity of prayer, back to back.

Your people who organized it flawlessly with extreme devotion, sleepless nights, details and details and more details, kept a posture of shining divinity with one-pointedness of reality to complete the project.

Not only have you done a great service to India, but you have done the greatest spiritual service to America and its people. You have added a "Statue of Spirituality" equal to the Statue of Liberty, which we love, adore, worship and feel proud of. We are the only nation in the world where we stood in "Hands Across America," and with the same love and devotion we held hands across heavenly atmospheres at the LOTUS. The atmosphere was so beautiful: angels danced, people enjoyed, and a remarkable achievement crowned America in its basic tradition. It's the nation of the nations; it's a melting pot from all spots, which totally receives the Oneness – the totality of God.

The altar and the decorated window of Sikh Dharma was great and totally effective. Your fountain of light delighted every heart; and the Light of God created a whirlwind around us bewitching us with the loftiness of experience and joy of union, which will be a golden page in the history of the United States of America and its beliefs which are its real strength.

To be very frank with you, you provided a day where angels with their wings were having a big feast, where souls were awakened and mortals were freed, and millions and millions of ghostly selves became holy and joined the core of the Holy Ghost, and father and son blended in the twilight of timelessness.

May I have the privilege to congratulate you on your great achievement. I do know that for eighteen years I have worked shoulder to shoulder with you. . . Who else but you could have done it all?

May your tranquility and peace, love and service be the guiding star for your stalwarts who carry your crown of heavenly responsibilities and graceful traditions.

May I conclude with the utmost feeling of gratitude that you have bestowed on India, the *Bharat Ratna*, and on America, the Star of Freedom.

With all love in Divine, in the Name of the Cosmos which prevails through every-BODY and the Holy *Nam* which holds the world.

Humbly yours,  
Siri Singh Sahib Bhai Sahib  
Harbhajan Singh Khalsa Yogiji



# Dedication Morning

by Janardhana Epstein

*The bagpipes clear my head  
Sweet dissonance  
Over low-hanging air  
Foreheads wet  
Clothes clinging*

*The parade!  
Bubbles Ganesh  
Kilted bagpiper  
Juggler whirling pins  
Stately ministers in yellow sashes  
The children's float declaring  
"We are the world!"*

*Now Sri Gurudev!  
Radiant Meru  
Of our human mala  
Etching on a hidden plane  
A crystal yantra*

*"Gopal, come back!"  
A little boy breaks through the crowd  
Catches Papa's eye  
"Come here, my Angel!"*

*Beneath canvas canopies  
Visitors search for good seats  
Organ music and brass horns  
Disperse humid thoughts*

*Celebrants light candles  
One source feeds all  
We mark time to a drum  
Clap to a tune  
Sing in tongues  
We do not know*

*Now Papa heads for the shrine*

*We follow  
Walking the heated earth  
To mass together  
Cordoned off midway  
Our hearts' desire  
The flower in the distance*

*Devotees and visitors  
Bees in a holding pattern  
Ready to swarm  
The monolithic bud  
To buzz the core  
And sip nectar*

*Noon!  
The light is lit  
The ribbon cut  
Statues unveiled  
Chapels blessed  
Dignitaries file out  
Chatting*

*Waiting to make a bee-line  
Is sweet*

# The Miracle of LOTUS

by Elizabeth Doyle Solomon



*Light Of Truth Universal Shrine  
From this day forward may you shine  
Into man's deep and darkened heart,  
Work miracles of earthly sort.*

*In ten directions, spread your light,  
Remove all prejudicial sight—  
Awaken seeds of love and kindness,  
Burn the weeds of hate and blindness.*

*Look at me careful, Black Elk prays,  
For my hand is sacred many ways—  
You are the world, we are the world;  
What promises wait, yet unfurled?*

*Shalom, says the rabbi, now and past  
We were all Jewish, clay jugs cast,  
Though all are painted differently,  
Just one God molds humanity.*

*"God was, God is, God always shall be,"  
So goes the prayer of the Pygmy—  
All people are short in God's sight,  
Til by love they attain new height.*

*"Pater noster, qui es in coelis..."  
The Benedictine chants in Latin—  
My father is your Father, too,  
Only His names are many and new.*

*Smooth-tongued Sikhs chant a foreign prayer,  
The words are strange but God is there,  
In Guru Dev, in you, in me—  
The miracle grows for all to see.*





# LOTUS Inspiration

*Dear Swamiji:*

*I thank you most sincerely for your kind personal invitation conveyed in your letter of 3 June. I was hoping very much to avail of it and join in the Symposium. Unfortunately, I find that some commitments at the United Nations, which I had hoped I might be able to reschedule, cannot be altered or avoided. Therefore, with deep regret and disappointment, I have to decline this invitation and the opportunity to participate in what I am sure will be a unique event. I take the opportunity of sending my warmest good wishes for the success of the Symposium under your gifted spiritual leadership.*

*With Namaskarams,  
Sri N. Krishnan  
Permanent Representative of India  
to the U.N.  
New York, N.Y.*

*Revered Swamiji:*

*I am but destined to visualize from distant India the glorious blooming of the LOTUS in Virginia on Sunday preceded by Saturday's World Faiths Symposium.*

*One thousand invitees from all over the world will be participating in the dedication ceremony of the LOTUS, a time-honored symbol of devotion transformed by Swamiji into a vibrant symbol of the essential unity of all religions. May LOTUS serve as a haven where people of different faiths can experience spiritual kinship and oneness. Virginia with its James River is blessed indeed to house this Shrine symbolizing the concept of the world as one family. With prayerful congratulations, good wishes and reverential pranams,*

*Sri Ramakrishnan  
Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan  
Bombay, India*

*My dear Reverend Sri Swami Satchidananda:*

*It is with deep regret that I am unable to attend the dedication of the Light Of Truth Universal Shrine on July 21, 1986.*

*An important conflict prevents my sharing this very special event with you and your people. During my visit over a year ago I had the opportunity to visit the Shrine during construction. I know the pride and joy that all of you will be feeling on that day.*

*Our insurance agency and our people want to share in your joy by asking that you accept the enclosed check as a very special congratulations from all of us here at Guardian Insurance.*

*We have all thoroughly enjoyed working with those who have been charged with the administration of the Ashram insurance program. We take great pride and pleasure in the friendships that have developed over the years.*

*In the spirit of this friendship and the common interests that we've shared, we extend our warmest wishes for a beautiful dedication and a most happy, peaceful and holy time for all!*

*Sincerely yours,  
Robert J. Gerardi  
President  
Gerardi Associates, Inc.  
Putnam, CT*

*Sri Swami Satchidananda*

*Hari Om. I send you my greetings and good wishes at this time of Guru Poomima. The LOTUS has lots of meaning for me and I will be with you in spirit.*

*Almost ten years ago I found my lotus; not even knowing what a lotus was then; but it came to me. It was not long after I had met Sri Swami Satyananda, and in the course of the next year, which was 1977, I had these experiences of bliss. This is what I wrote:*

*You are my teacher, and you I do not know.  
The language I communicate with, I have never heard.  
All I want is just one word to tell what this really meant.  
This I do not have, for it was heaven sent.  
Show me the way to show to others, the love I have for you, for I am overflowing.  
I do not preach, I do not teach, for I am not God made man.  
I hear no sound, I have no sight, I am humbled before the Infinite.  
Just a lotus flower drifting on an ocean of light.  
The rays from up above and far away pierce the darkness of this day.  
There is no doubt, there is no fear, and emotion, too, disappears when you are here.*

*The lotus of my vision was depicted on a white plate. Only eight of these plates were obtainable and they had the shape of eight petals built in. These plates were hand painted with the lotus and the eight rays either*

*coming from the sun or from the lotus. There is a page about the plate which I will delete and it continues thus:*

The mould was fashioned by a thought of a lotus flower in the beginning.

Silently echoing, directing me to express the part of me that you do not see.

Was that state so divine, a once in a lifetime luxury; oh no it is really reality for me.

This plate hangs high upon the wall so to be surveyed by all.

Has my view been restricted to the place where I stand here on the ground.

Am I free, or am I bound?

The life I have I have been given.

The breath I have is not mine.

The sight I have is for seeing the beauty all around.

And my ears are for hearing sounds of laughter and the crying.

And words unspoken of the sick and the dying.

My voice is for singing songs of praise for being.

I look about and what do I see.

I have no house, I have no home, I have no wife and family.

These I do not miss, for I have your company.

Now we are eight breaths joined as one.

Yet we stand individually as eight rays of light from the Sun.

So my joy lingers on like the fragrance of incense from the distant beyond.

If I had the wings of a bird I would fly on high to glorify Thee.

For you are beautiful

And I love Thee

More than words can tell.

*This is the song of my soul written while I was milking the cows on the 30th of November 1976, my birthday. I hope one day that all will feel this glow of unconditional love from the creator to the created. I offer this to you as something to share, which is beyond words, but more real for being this way.*

*I leave you as always with my  
unconditional love.*

*Swami Anandasagar*

*Satchidananda Ashram-Yogaville*

*Buchan, Australia*

*Dear Gurudev:*

*May the Dedication of the LOTUS dye the coming years with the pastels of deeper peace and ecumenism for America, India and the world. Congratulations to all.*

*Raymond Palitha Rosenthal, M.D.  
Capitola, CA*



## *Our Most Revered Swamiji:*

*It was only by God's grace that I was able to visit your wonderful Ashram. Otherwise I could not have made a visit on my own. I was very fortunate in accompanying a very good and noble soul who was responsible for my visit to a very great, very noble and a very holy Swamiji. "Delighted" is not the word - I was so much thrilled by the atmosphere full of love, discipline, devotion and duty - headed by a Master in every field. You are so practical. How much you are involved in building the LOTUS Temple! From brick to brick - from an ordinary worker to the Master Craftsman - guiding and encouraging people and setting an example in everything for others to follow.*

*The way you look after people is amazing and phenomenal. You look into even the most minute detail of everyone. As I told you, Swamiji, I really can not find appropriate words still to express all my feelings experienced while I was there. I would have been ignorant of all the best things in life if I had not visited the Ashram. You are so very human, so simple, so loving and also very firm. You are such a very great being at heart and soul.*

*I am a very simple fellow, by nature. I am a very blunt fellow so whatever I say about you and the Ashram are from the bottom of my heart. I am only struggling for appropriate words to express my feelings.*

*My whole family and I will ever remain indebted to you. We pray to God that we may be blessed by you. May the Humanity continue to have your blessings.*

*Ever obedient, grateful and sincere,  
Dr. S. Muthuvairu  
Madras, India*

## *Reverend Sri Swami Satchidananda:*

*We find it exhilarating to know that the aims and objectives of the World Faiths Symposium are to inculcate the thought that the idea of love is tolerance, growth, flexible mutuality and progressive harmony and to participate in the creative advance of life.*

*Yours is a journey to achieve stability and inner repose in a world of shifting threats and terrifying changes as Bertrand Russell declared.*

*At a time when there is such cruelty in the world your dedication generates the Oxygen of Love to keep the soul of the world still breathing.*

*Fortunate is the soul that found lodgement in the spaceless dimensions of divine love which apparently is your credo. May your efforts be blessed for yours is a spiritual advancement and like Dante in the "Paradiso" you can say "In Thy Will Is Our Peace."*

*With best and sincere wishes,*

*Yours in reverence,  
Raju Rasiah and children  
Kumarasingham, Rajakumara and  
Yogesh  
Colombo, Sri Lanka*

Dear Swami Satchidananda:

You may recall that as part of my Ph.D. studies at Columbia University, I studied Satchidananda Ashram in Connecticut. This was in 1978-9. When I returned for the recent opening of the Light Of Truth Universal Shrine, I was fascinated with what has happened in the community.

There were 53 people in the ashram when I studied it. Of these, 45 were at the LOTUS opening. There were 27 who continued to live at the Ashram and 18 who returned for the ceremonies. Another 3, though they were not present, are active in the IYI. Most members of the Ashram in 1979 still have a vital connection with the Ashram seven years later.

I was impressed with the growth of several members. For example, Swami Nirmalananda Ma . . . Despite the constant demands of so many guests, and despite the extremely hot and humid weather, she labored into the night – well past midnight – to make each guest feel like a Very Important Guest.

It was gratifying to see the growth of the Ashram and the Ashram community. I hope to return soon again.

Sincerely,  
Ernest Volin, Ph.D.  
Seattle, WA

Dear Gurudev:

We want to first thank you for including us in the World Faiths Symposium weekend upon the recommendation of our very close, mutual friend, Barbara Marx Hubbard.

This was a very spiritual experience and an opportunity to meet with old and new friends. Especially appreciated was the sharing in the vibration of oneness and Grace that is so inherent in the LOTUS thought.

Our prayers are with you and your efforts, and we hope for an opportunity to talk with you soon concerning international peace and the possibilities of the at-one-ment of all humankind.

In the essence of The Divine Father/Mother/God, we wish you continuing success.

With heartfelt regards,  
Judson E. Edwards  
E. Jean Rodgers  
Covington, KY

Dear Swamiji:

I am writing to tell you I love you and although I have only been on the train for two hours I am missing you and the Ashram very very much.

I think you are the coolest, greatest swami in the whole world!! When my family and I left, I had a lump in my throat because I missed everyone, especially you.

Hopefully, I will return next year even if my mom does not come with

me. I think I am old enough to travel alone and I will try to convince my mom to let me. If I do come, I will stay for a longer time.

I love you,  
R.H.  
Hong Kong

Sri Swamiji:

I wish to thank you and all members of the LOTUS community for the kind reception and gracious hospitality extended to me on the occasion of the World Faiths Symposium.

In gratitude I should like you to receive the enclosed photograph I made of a lotus bud and blossom. There is a story behind these blossoms which you may like to know. The seeds were unearthed in the 1920s in a dried ancient lake bed near P'u-lan-tien in Manchuria. They were discovered in a layer of peat overlaid by up to five feet of lotus dust. Some believe the lake drained as a result of an uplifting of the earth's crust in the Pleistocene Age, 50,000 years ago. Radioactive carbon dating of additional seeds from this site indicates that they are between 800 and 1580 years old. Through these centuries the seeds slept in the earth. Two seeds were brought to the Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens in Washington, D.C. Tended there, in 1952 these East Indian lotus plants germinated and bloomed for the first time. They continue to grow there, as you can see from my photograph.

I send it to you with my best wishes and warmest regards.

Sincerely yours,  
Reverend John F. Hotchkin  
Executive Director  
Bishop's Committee for Ecumenical  
and Interreligious Affairs  
National Conference of  
Catholic Bishops

Dear Swamiji:

Thank you for inviting me to the Opening of the LOTUS Shrine. Congratulations and all great success. May God bless this monumental offering.

Sincerely,  
Turiyasangitananda  
Vedantic Center  
Agoura, CA







## In Memoriam: Ed Withers

Ed Withers, a resident of Satchidananda Ashram-Yogaville, left the body on 2 July 1986. An Ashram resident since November 1985, Ed had spent most of his life in Texas. Ed attended St. Mary's College and taught mathematics in a Catholic school after his graduation. Though very adept at mathematics and computer logic, Ed was above all a seeker for the Truth, and his inner life and growth was always of the utmost importance to him. His discovery of Yoga gave real direction to this inner imperative.

In 1970, in San Antonio, Ed helped organize a yoga club which attracted a dedicated membership. He first met Sri Gurudev Swami Satchidananda in 1974, and later that year was instrumental in

the formation of an Integral Yoga Teaching Center in the city of San Antonio. Later, when a building was purchased and the Teaching Center became an Integral Yoga Institute, he supported many of its functions financially while living very simply himself.

At the same time, Ed was working for the government in San Antonio developing computer programs. He also put his computer genius to a spiritual use. Combining this skill with his love for Sanskrit – which he taught himself over the years – he worked to compile computer programs for teaching Sanskrit and making it more accessible to Westerners. During this period of his life, he translated several of the Yogic scriptures into English, and also chanted the *Bhagavad Gita* daily in Sanskrit.

Gradually Ed made a decision to sell all of his possessions, except his computer and sewing machine, and moved to the Ashram late in 1985. He felt that he had found the place where he wanted to spend the rest of his life. He then began to fully devote himself to his computer work and to service at the Ashram. Among his many services, he lovingly sewed robes for the *sannyasins* (monks). Ed set forth to memorize the *Yoga Sutras*, in Sanskrit as well as English, as he studied them again and again; he accomplished this goal before his death.

God saw fit to remove Ed Withers from our midst. For family and friends who are left behind, it is difficult; but we know that this event is in perfect accordance with God's plan for the journey of the soul back to the Source. Ed will be remembered by all as one who used words sparingly but whose actions spoke the language of giving. He was a humble, generous and selfless friend to all in need. We will miss him dearly.

–Vivekan Flint



## *The Meaning of* **LOTUS**

LOTUS is a place where people can come when they're feeling bad or feeling sad, it is to help them feel better.

You do not have to practice a certain religion to go there, you do not even have to believe in God.

God will help bring world peace and help people realize that all religions have the same value and all of them lead to God.

Ram Wenzel, age 10

LOTUS is important because it unites all religions. It shows that all religions are equal. They all use God as light.

It tries to stop fighting in the name of religions.

People are prejudiced against others because of different views. I am sometimes mad at others when they don't like my ideas. If we could cooperate or see how much our ideas are the same, we wouldn't fight so much. LOTUS shows the unity of all the religions.

Mohan Hansma, age 11

What does LOTUS mean? Just another tourist attraction? NO! LOTUS is a symbol of peace, a place where all religions have great value, a place to come when you think life has no meaning, a place to come when you want peace.

When you come to LOTUS you do not have to believe in God, you do not have to believe in anything, just walk in, and walk out feeling much better. That's what it's there for.

Dayalan Otto, age 11

LOTUS is very important to the world. It proves and reminds us that all religions are good.

LOTUS is a temple of all religions. It's the first place in which all the religions are all together. The LOTUS also brings all different kinds of people from around the world together.

The LOTUS means Truth, light and it's a universal shrine. The LOTUS is trying to make us all friends not prejudiced. We want to treat everybody equally.

LOTUS wants to bring all friends together and have them accept each other for who they are and what religion they practice. We just want Peace.

Geni Oba, age 10



*The children of the Yogaville Vidyalayam.*

LOTUS means peace in the world. People always fight because they think it brings peace. They make bigger and better weapons, but they don't bring peace. LOTUS will bring some part of the world peace by showing people it's okay to worship God in their own way.

Ishwara Tolton, age 8

Light is one of the universal symbols for God and that is why Gurudev designed the LOTUS with the center light going to all the altars. To concentrate on the things that are the same in religions will promote peace instead of fighting between all religions. By learning to work with one another there will be more peace and love in the world.

Vivekan Nichols, age 11

Light means Peace

Light means Joy

Light is Light

Without light all peaceful beings and objects would disappear.

Just imagine we would just disappear just like that with a snap of a finger.

What LOTUS means to me is that Gurudev wants to bring peace to the Nations. I understand how he's doing it. LOTUS is beautiful. Even the greedy hearts will fall in love with a beautiful sight that is uniting the religions. So maybe the greedy hearts will fall in love with not only the sight but the meaning of the LOTUS. When the greedy hearts understand LOTUS they will say they were so foolish to not respect their brothers and sisters. They will say that the first time they saw LOTUS they begged every [aspect of] God they knew of to forgive their past years that they failed from God's way.

Sean Schoonover, age 10



I think LOTUS is important because there really is nothing like it. And it's amazing that something could hold so much powerful vibrations. The fact that all the religions are represented. It has all of them and I can't believe that people will literally fight over religion, it's really strange for people to act like that. The LOTUS is for peace and we should consider ourselves lucky to have something so beautiful. The joy of every inch is unbelievable.

Sri Ram McCabe, age 9

The meaning of LOTUS is for all religions to come together as one and for world peace. It's to help people not fight against the other religions and help them be more open to other religions.

It doesn't matter who your god is or how He or She dresses or what the rules are. All that matters is to dedicate yourself to God and think of God every second of the day. Then God will come to you and you will be one with God. Then you will want to help other people to experience the same.

That's what LOTUS means to me.

Suguna Herrsche, age 10

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## In the Heart of the Jewel

*We wait in bare feet  
Gazing at the Flower  
Gold crown fit for a deity*

*A signal! We may pass!  
Our soles leave traces  
Of apricot dust  
On the path hurrying  
Into the lower hall  
Public worshippers  
Marveling at the proportions  
Celestial haven*

*We file out  
Briskly to the chapels  
In the heart of the jewel*

*In silence  
We take reverent note  
The central light  
Rising to a height  
The light bulging  
From the love breath of  
Heaven's glassblower  
Rose-pink self-effulgent  
Bursting into twelve violet  
Apostolic rays floating to earth  
Where Lila's play emerges*

*Hollowed white chapels  
Raised alabaster palms  
Cupping altars  
Supporting a thought  
Etched on wood  
My eye alights on one  
And knows its truth:  
The Lord is my light  
Whom shall I fear?*

*One soul among many  
I breathe in this long-awaited joy  
Then exit  
Overlooking the land I weep  
Taken unawares  
By so noble an expression  
Of truth and beauty  
This living beatitude*

*Shortly upon my return  
In silent meditation  
A white light  
Became rose  
Joined twelve purple rays  
Neon visible in my  
Corporeal self  
And I thought  
Ho! One more romantic notion  
Still  
The image  
Lingers*

**by  
Janardhana  
Epstein**



## ALL SORTS OF PEOPLE

*a children's story*  
by Prema Eberle

Late one sunny, summer afternoon in June a big yellow moving truck pulled a small blue station wagon on a gravel road and stopped over to one side. Out spilled a tall, red-bearded father, a mother with a round, blue-eyed baby on her hip, and a small girl named Annie with yellow braids, a green skirt, and a pink bear.

After a short walk in the woods, they got a food basket out of the car and settled down for lunch on a pile of new lumber. But even before the mother got the bread for the first cheese-tomato-and-onion sandwich buttered and mustard, a pickup truck stopped and another man got out with a little boy. There was hugging and hollering and backslapping then.

Annie and her family had returned to YOCOSO, the Yogaville Cooperative Society, to lease land and build a house near their old friends. The hot, wet air was full of bugs, the smell of new wood,

and — strangely — a spirit of Christmas. Next month was the dedication and opening of LOTUS, Light Of Truth Universal Shrine, a shrine for all the religions of the world at once, all together, side-by-side like neighbors. People from all over the world who understood how wonderful it would be for everyone to be friends, were filling the neighborhood. So Annie and her family had brought a big tent to live in while they built their house. The lumber was for the tent platform and a shed to unload their things into.

During lunch and all the next days, cars continued to stop by: old beat-up cars and pickups and expensive new cars and fancy vans. All sorts of people came by: tall, thin, stern people with blond hair; and short, round jolly people with black hair. Men with beards and pony-tails, as well as cleancut businessmen. Americans, Indians, French; Christians, Jews, Hindus. This neighborhood was full of all kinds of people, but they had two things in common. They loved their neighbors, and they loved God.



The little girl next door arrived like a timid brown mouse, and another girl from down the street came whistling along the next day. They made friends more quietly.

After a very interrupted lunch, the man went straight to work building the tent platform. A woman brought a pitcher of ice water, and several men showed up with hammers; but the sun went down too soon for them to finish. So the woman next door offered her screen porch for the family to sleep on. This offer was gratefully accepted, and so were the warm showers. Annie and her family slept well.

In the next four days the men pitched

the tent and built the shed and unloaded the big, yellow moving truck. Annie's family returned the truck to Charlottesville, the nearest big town, an hour away. With the neighbor's many willing offers of showers and washing machines, Annie and her family knew that tenting would be a real vacation – with all the fun parts, and not so much of the hard parts. They would eat in the community dining room – simple, inexpensive meals with lots of good company. The LOTUS dedication would come and go, but this very special neighborhood would live and grow, raising children who would include all *sorts* of people in the one Great Command: "Love one another."

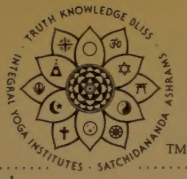


*People came from all around the world for the Dedication of the LOTUS. The countries represented were:*

Australia  
Belgium  
Bermuda  
Brazil  
Canada  
France  
Great Britain  
Greece  
Hong Kong  
India  
Israel  
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*"The life force that runs through this body is the same that runs through a small mosquito.*

*That means, we are all united in spirit."*  
- Sri Gurudev

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*"God has simply moved me from place to place. This is all God's work, not mine."*

- Sri Gurudev



*"We are all different physically, mentally, materially. But in one thing we are one. That is spirit."*

- Sri Gurudev

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*"If we don't have problems, then we don't have the fun of overcoming them!"*

- Sri Gurudev

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*"If God is love, it means  
that if you can express that  
universal love, you are none  
other than God."*

*- Sri Gurudev*

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*"If you recognize yourself as Spirit,  
you can no longer say,  
'Only this is my home,  
only these are my people.'"*

*- Sri Gurudev*

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*"Unless we use the heart, there's no way  
of coming together. Universal love is the  
opening of the heart."*

*- Sri Gurudev*

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*"Long identification comes from the head,  
from the heart. The head is a hard nut.  
The heart is sweet."*

*- Sri Gurudev*

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*"See everybody as your friend, as you brother,  
as your sister. We are all God's children."*

*- Sri Gurudev*

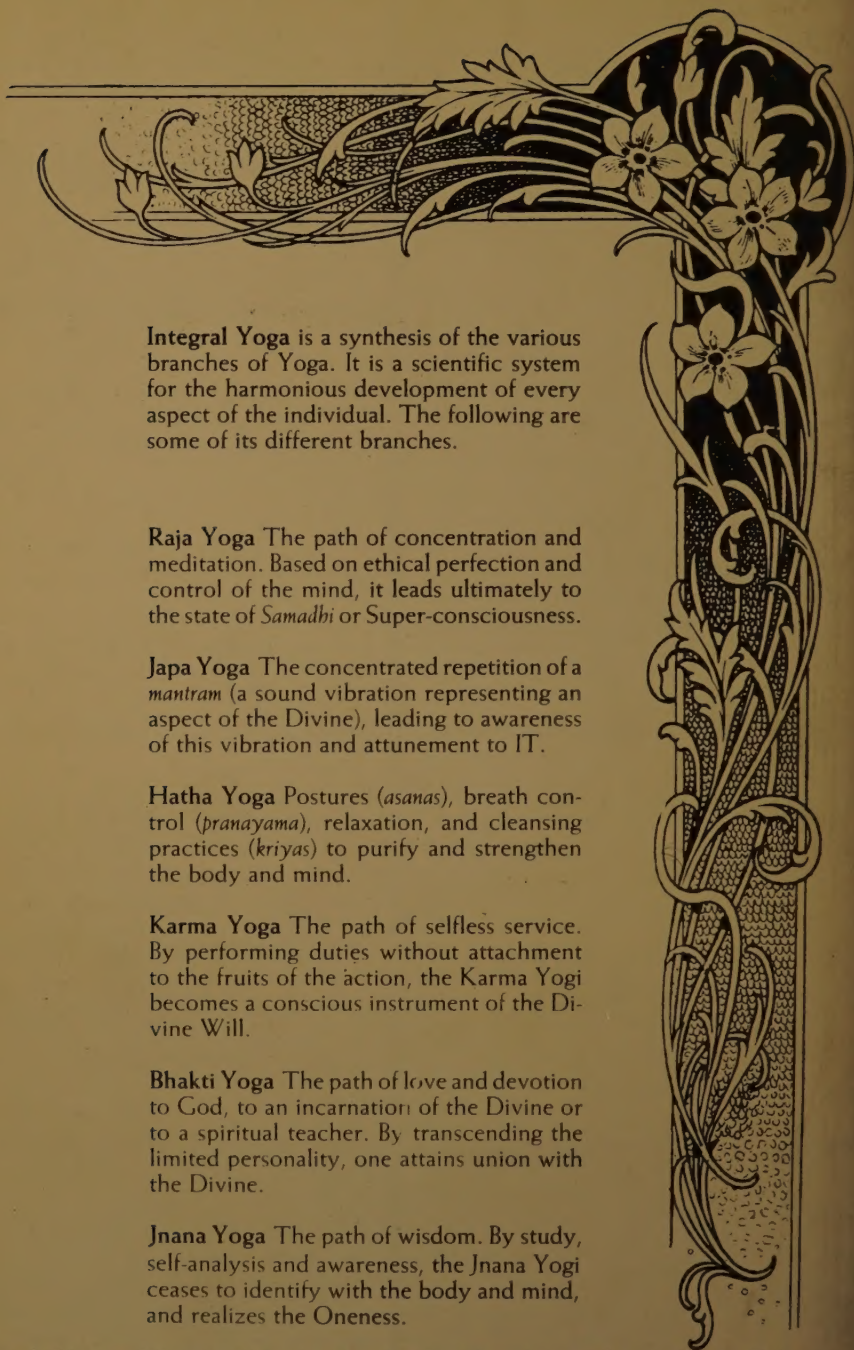
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*"Not only charity that begins at home,  
the knowledge of one's own self helps you  
yourself in everybody, in everything."*

*- Sri Gurudev*

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**Integral Yoga** is a synthesis of the various branches of Yoga. It is a scientific system for the harmonious development of every aspect of the individual. The following are some of its different branches.

**Raja Yoga** The path of concentration and meditation. Based on ethical perfection and control of the mind, it leads ultimately to the state of *Samadhi* or Super-consciousness.

**Japa Yoga** The concentrated repetition of a *mantram* (a sound vibration representing an aspect of the Divine), leading to awareness of this vibration and attunement to IT.

**Hatha Yoga** Postures (*asanas*), breath control (*pranayama*), relaxation, and cleansing practices (*kriyas*) to purify and strengthen the body and mind.

**Karma Yoga** The path of selfless service. By performing duties without attachment to the fruits of the action, the Karma Yogi becomes a conscious instrument of the Divine Will.

**Bhakti Yoga** The path of love and devotion to God, to an incarnation of the Divine or to a spiritual teacher. By transcending the limited personality, one attains union with the Divine.

**Jnana Yoga** The path of wisdom. By study, self-analysis and awareness, the Jnana Yogi ceases to identify with the body and mind, and realizes the Oneness.

The goal of Integral Yoga is: "A body of perfect health and strength, mind with all clarity and control, intellect as sharp as a razor, will of steel, heart full of love and mercy, a life dedicated to the common welfare, and realization of the true Self."

*Swami Satishdevana*  
B.